

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



May 6, 1999

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE I-33-99

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
AFLP COORDINATORS  
CAL-LEARN WORKGROUP MEMBERS  
CAL-LEARN COORDINATORS

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- ☐ State Law Change
- ☐ Federal Law or Regulation Change
- ☐ Court Order
- ☐ Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- ☒ Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: CLARIFICATION ON CAL-LEARN ISSUES

As part of the evaluation of the Cal-Learn program, UC Data recently released their second and final report on the implementation of the Cal-Learn program. The report, entitled "Implementation of California's Cal-learn Demonstration Project," covers the operation of the program from July 1996-December 1997, and was released to the counties earlier this year. This report cites a few program areas where there is still some confusion, e.g., identification of teens eligible for Cal-Learn and other programs in addition to Cal-Learn that impact pregnant/parenting teens. Also, questions arising at recent Cal-Learn Workgroup meetings and county meetings indicate similar areas of confusion.

The purpose of this All County Information Notice is to provide clarification in the program areas still causing concern. These are not changes to current policy. This letter transmits an enclosure that addresses these concerns. Also enclosed is an updated Cal-Learn Program Analyst County Contact list. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact your county's Cal-Learn Program Analyst.

***Original Document Signed By  
Jo Weber on 05/06/99***

JO WEBER, Chief  
Work Services and Demonstration Projects Branch

Enclosures

**1. What criteria is used to determine mandatory participation in the Cal-Learn program for teens 18 years and younger?**

To be determined eligible for mandatory participation in the Cal-Learn program, the teen must meet the following criteria:

- (a) Be a CalWORKs recipient under the age of 19; and
- (b) Not have obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent; and
- (c) Reside with his/her child in the same AU; or
- (d) Be pregnant and the pregnancy is verified under MPP Section 80-301(m)(2).

Teens meeting this criteria are considered mandatory participants, unless exempt, and must be enrolled in the Cal-Learn Program. Counties should actively seek out and identify any Cal-Learn eligible teens during the intake process, or monthly review of the CA 7 for nested teens.

**2. How are 19 year olds determined to be eligible to continue participation on a voluntary basis in the Cal-Learn program?**

MPP Section 42-763.12 states that individuals who meet the following conditions may participate in the Cal-Learn Program on a voluntary basis:

- 121 Is a CalWORKs recipient 19 years of age;
- 122 Was participating in the Cal-Learn program prior to becoming 19 years of age;
- 123 Has not obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent;
- 124 Is attending high school or an equivalent program on a full-time basis, as defined by the school, unless the county welfare department determines that the teen has good cause for not complying with this requirement; and
- 125 Resides with his or her child in the same AU or is pregnant and the pregnancy is verified under Section 80-301(m)(2).

If it is determined that the teen does not meet all of these criteria, she is not permitted to participate in the program. If the teen meets the criteria and elects to continue participation as a volunteer, then subsequently chooses to not continue attending school, the county cannot “unvolunteer” her. Rather, the county must apply the sanctions until she reaches her twentieth birthday or she elects to terminate her participation in the Cal-Learn Program or she returns to school on a full time basis.

### EXAMPLE

Upon turning 19, a teen elects to continue to participate as a volunteer. After three months of participation as a volunteer, the teen quits attending school. The county cannot terminate her participation as a volunteer. Instead, the county will apply sanctions as appropriate until the teen ages out of the program upon turning 20.

**3. Is there a requirement to budget \$1650 for each Cal-Learn client for case management services per year?**

No. The \$1650 budgeted per Cal-Learn client per year for case management services was required in departmental budget language until FY 97/98. Beginning with July 1, 1998, this language was eliminated due to the CalWORKs block grant allocation to the counties. It is now the responsibility of the county to negotiate the cost per case with the case management agency.

**4. Are 18 and 19 year olds who are Cal-Learn participants and in high school included in the federal work participation rate?**

Some Cal-Learn participants are included in the federal work participation rate. Married 18-year old parents, 18-year old heads of households, and 19-year old parents are included in the denominator of the federal work participation rate. Individuals in these groups are counted in the numerator if they maintain satisfactory attendance at a secondary school or in a course of study leading to a certificate of general equivalence or participate in other work activities in accordance with MPP 42-714.

Unmarried 18-year-old parents who are **not** heads of households are excluded from the federal participation rate because they are considered to be children.

**5. When is a pregnant teen applicant eligible for CalWORKs and the pregnancy special need payment?**

MPP Section 42-762.7 specifically states:

A pregnant teen with no other children (AU of one) who has entered the Cal-Learn Program under MPP Section 42-764.1 shall be eligible for CalWORKs and the pregnancy special need payment under Section 44-211.6. MPP Section 44.211.6, in summary, states that Cal-Learn teens are eligible to receive the pregnancy special need payment from the date of application and continuing through the month of birth. Therefore, counties should not deny cash aid to pregnant teens who are in the first trimesters of pregnancy. Teens pregnant with a second, or subsequent child will be only eligible for the pregnancy special needs payment beginning with the third trimester.

**6. Can counties begin transitioning teen parents from Cal-Learn to Welfare-to-Work during the last six months prior to graduation or aging out?**

Yes. MPP Section 42-766.672 requires that the case manager (county and AFLP) assist the teen parent in transitioning to independent living or to participation in Welfare-to-Work activities when it is known to the case manager that the teen parent is approaching the end of participation in the Cal-Learn program.

A few examples of these types of activities include job search skills, work study, on the job training or other assignments that provide participants with job skills. Because Cal-Learn participants are exempt from Welfare-to-Work requirements, and such services are considered transitional services, the Welfare-to-Work requirements do not apply during this transition period.

**7. Are the CalWORKs school attendance requirements applied to teens that are eligible for Cal-Learn?**

No. MPP Section 40-105.5(c) exempts pregnant or parenting teens eligible for Cal-Learn as stated in ACL 98-35 dated May 27, 1998. Also, ACL 98-36 dated May 29, 1998, clarified that eligible Cal-Learn teens were exempt from the school attendance requirements.

**8. What other programs affect pregnant/parenting teens?**

In addition to the Cal-Learn program, the Teen Pregnancy Disincentive, the Pregnancy Special Needs Payment, and the Maximum Family Grant are all program areas affecting pregnant/parenting teens.

**Teen Pregnancy Disincentive (MPP Section 89-200):** Also known as the minor parent program, this requirement became effective March 1, 1997. It requires pregnant/parenting minors who have never been married to live with their senior parent(s), legal guardian(s), or other adult relative or in an adult supervised supportive living arrangement, such as a maternity/group home. The minor is exempt when he/she meets one of the following conditions:

- The minor has no parent or legal guardian: who is living, whose whereabouts is known, or who will allow the minor to live in his/her home; or
- A Child Protective Services social worker determines that the physical or emotional health or safety of the minor parent and his/her dependent child would be jeopardized if the minor and child lived in the home with the senior parent or legal guardian; or
- The minor has lived apart from the senior parent or legal guardian for a period of at least twelve months prior to the birth of the dependent child or the application for aid; or
- The minor is legally emancipated.

**Pregnancy Special Needs Payment (MPP Section 44-211.6):** This provides the teen mother with a monetary payment during her pregnancy -- see Question #5 above for additional information about the Pregnancy Special Needs payment.

**Maximum Family Grant (MPP Section 44-314):** This requirement states that there will be no increase in the grant amount as a result of the birth of an additional child(ren) born after July 31, 1997 when the custodial parent has been aided for 10 months prior to the birth. In some cases, a teen parent may already be aided in her parent's AU. If the AU was informed of the MFG guidelines and on aid for 10 months prior to the birth of the teen's child, the child may be considered an MFG child.

**9. What are the timeframes for the issuance of bonuses and the application of sanctions?**

**Bonuses:** The date the bonus is issued is based upon the date the appropriate documentation (e.g. a report card) is received. If the documentation is received by the eleventh calendar day of the month, the bonus will be issued the following month. If the documentation is received after the eleventh calendar day of the month, the bonus is issued no later than the second month following receipt of the documentation.

EXAMPLE

If the appropriate documentation is received between the dates of March 1 through March 11, the bonus will be issued in April.

If the appropriate documentation is received between the dates of March 12 through March 31, the bonus will be issued in May.

**Sanctions:** Upon receipt of the appropriate documentation (e.g. a report card) the county welfare department determines if a sanction is applicable and then sends a notice of action to the caretaker relative prior to applying the sanction. The sanction will be applied over the next two months following transmission of the notice of action.

EXAMPLE

The documentation is submitted on March 5 and the county welfare department makes a determination that a sanction must be applied. A notice of action is sent to the caretaker relative on March 20. The sanction is applied during the months of April and May.

**10. How to streamline the delivery of supportive services**

The delivery of supportive services can be a difficult process and counties are encouraged to find ways to streamline the procedures for delivering supportive services. Examples of methods some counties have implemented to streamline this process include: 1) issuing monthly bus passes rather than daily tokens. This results in less paperwork for the case manager and is more cost effective than issuing daily tokens. It also allows the teen to use the bus for other activities in addition to traveling to and from school such as medical appointments and job interviews; and, 2) Some child care providers have resisted providing child care to Cal-Learn clients because of the paperwork involved. Some counties have eliminated the requirement that child care providers and school staff match student attendance records and instead allow teens and case managers to certify school attendance.

# **CAL-LEARN PROGRAM COUNTY ASSIGNMENTS**

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Nevada	Inyo	Marin	San Benito
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Riverside	Madera	Modoc	San Mateo
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